

Message Text

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17

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

AID-05 IGA-02 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MC-02 ACDA-07

SAJ-01 ARA-06 /094 W

----- 071531

R 060615Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9394

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 0534

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MPOL, WZ

SUBJECT: GOS REQUEST FOR AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

REF: STATE 59594

1. IN MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 1, GOS MINISTER OF FINANCE R.P. STEPHENS ASKED IF USG COULD PROVIDE GOS WITH LONG TERM CREDIT TO PURCHASE AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. STEPHENS SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF SOVIET/ CUBAN BACKED MPLA SUCCESS IN ANGOLA, GOS WAS GETTING INCREASINGLY NERVOUS ABOUT ITS SECURITY. SOME MINISTERS HAD ALREADY MADE CONTACT WITH EUROPEAN ARMS MERCHANTS AND HAD REPORTEDLY SIGNED AGREEMENTS TO PURCHASE WEAPONS. MINISTER SAID GOS HAD NO WAY OF CHECKING IF GOS WAS BEING QUOTED A FAIR PRICE, AND HE WOULD MUCH PREFER TO DEAL WITH OR THROUGH USG. AMBASSADOR REPLIED ALONG LINES REFTTEL, THAT USG CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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PROGRAMS WE ARE CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING ARE MOST APPROPRIATE FROM FOR USG ASSISTANCE TO SWAZILAND.

2. ALTHOUGH STEPHENS IS CLEARLY NOT FAMILIAR WITH WEAPONS, HE GAVE

IMPRESSION GOS WAS INTERESTED ONLY IN AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, NOT MORE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT.

3. COMMENT: SWAZILAND'S CONCERN ABOUT ITS INTERNAL SECURITY HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED SINCE THE CLOSURE OF THE RHODESIAN/MOZAMBIQUE BORDER AND COLLAPSE OF THE SMITH-NKOMO NEGOTIATIONS ON RHODESIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE. NEW PRIME MINISTER HAS POINTEDLY EXPRESSED CONCERN TO AMBASSADOR ABOUT SWAZI SECURITY AND WONDERED IF USG COULD ASSIST (MBABANE 0514). GOS APPREHENSION WAS ALSO REFLECTED IN RECENT BUDGET PROPOSAL TO INCREASE COMPANY TAX TO RAISE ADDITIONAL E1.3 MILLION TO IMPROVE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES. GIVEN THE EXISTING TRENDS IN REGIONAL SECURITY, THE GOS MAY WELL MAKE FORMAL APPROACH TO U.S. ONCE MORE FOR ASSISTANCE IN PURCHASING SMALL ARMS. GOS CONCERNS FULLY JUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF THE POTENTIAL INFILTRATION THREAT FROM MOZAMBIQUE AND INADEQUATE STATE OF SWAZILAND'S BORDER SECURITY. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THAT IT MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH SWAZILAND'S ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES ACT, WE WOULD NEVERTHELESS APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR GUIDANCE THAT WOULD ENABLE US TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO ANY FUTURE GOS APPROACHES. IF GOS WISHES TO MAKE A STRAIGHT PURCHASE OF AMERICAN-MADE AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, IS THERE A COMPANY OR AGENCY TO WHICH WE COULD REFER THEM? WOULD DEPT. APPROVE SUCH A SALE? IS THERE ANY POSSIBLE SOURCE OF FINANCING AVAILABLE? ANY INFO ALONG THESE LINES WOULD BE HELPFUL.

BOLEN

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GABORONE
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MAPUTO
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